

Meal Charge Policy

I. Purpose

The goal of the Acushnet Public Schools is to provide students with healthy meals each day. However, unpaid charges place a large financial burden on our Food Services Department. The purpose of this policy is to insure compliance with federal reporting requirements for the USDA Child Nutrition Program, and to provide oversight and accountability for the collection of outstanding student meal balances.

Students are expected to pay for their meals at the time of service. Students paying full and reduced prices are encouraged to prepay by the week or month. This may be done on line through www.myschoolbucks.com, or at the point of service.

The intent of this policy is to establish uniform meal account procedures throughout the Acushnet Public Schools. The provisions of this policy pertain to regular priced school breakfast and lunch meals only. While the USDA Child Nutrition Program does not require that a student who pays for regular priced meals be served a meal without payment, the Acushnet Public Schools provides this policy as a courtesy to those students in the event that they forget or lose their lunch money.

II. Policy Full Pay Students - Elementary and Middle School Students will pay for meals at the district's published standard rate each day. Elementary students will be allowed to charge a maximum of eight meals to their account after their balance reaches zero. Middle School students will be allowed to charge a maximum of seven meals after their balance reaches zero. Once a student has charged the maximum, he/she will not be allowed to charge a la carte items, however he/she will be offered a designated menu alternate. Sample: cheese sandwich, veggie sticks, fruit and milk. This designated menu alternate will be charged to the child's meal account at the standard rate.

Free Meal Benefit - Free status students will be allowed to receive a free breakfast and lunch each day. A la carte purchases must be prepaid.

Reduced Meal Benefit - Reduced status students will be allowed to charge a maximum of six (6) meals to their account after the balance reaches zero. Once a student has charged those six meals, he/she will not be allowed to charge a la carte items, however he/she will be offered a designated menu alternate. Sample: cheese sandwich, veggie sticks, fruit and milk. This designated menu alternate will be charged to the child's meal account at the reduced rate.

Parents/Guardians are responsible for meal payment to the food service program. Notices of low or deficit balances will be sent to parents/guardians at regular intervals during the school year.

All school cafeterias possess computerized point of sale/cash register systems that maintain records of all monies deposited and spent for each student and said records are available by setting up an account at www.myschoolbucks.com or by speaking with the cafeteria manager.

Students/Parents/Guardians pay for meals in advance via www.myschoolbucks.com or with a check payable to Acushnet Food Service. Further details are available on our webpage at www.acushnetschools.us. Funds should be maintained in accounts to minimize the possibility that a child may be without meal money on any given day. Any remaining funds for a particular student will be carried over to the next school year.

Refunds for students who have left the district may be requested by the submission of a written request for a refund of any money remaining in their account. An e-mail request is also acceptable. Students who are graduating at the end of the year will be given the option to transfer to a sibling's account with a written request.

Unclaimed Funds must be requested within one school year. Unclaimed funds will then become the property of the Acushnet Public Schools Food Service Program.

Balances Owed collection of owed balances will follow the policies and procedures set by M.G.L. Chapter 71: Section 72. Sale of lunches.

If a student is without meal money on a consistent basis, the administration will investigate the situation more closely and take further action as needed. If financial hardship exists, parents and families are encouraged to apply for free or reduced price lunches for their child

Adopted: 12/8/15